



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

For 12 years AOT has hosted the Arizona Showcase in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, an incredible event that has played a vital role in our marketing efforts to the Mexican visitor. This visitor segment is tremendously important to Arizona, as is evident in our recent research survey: [*Mexican Visitors to Arizona – Visitor Characteristics and Economic Impacts, 2007-08.*](#)

With the Arizona Showcase, travel agents, tour operators, media representatives and the public get to experience a dynamic tradeshow with numerous exhibitors and destination marketing organizations on hand to spotlight their visitor destination.

By promoting fall and holiday shopping, attractions and accommodations all throughout the Grand Canyon State, both residents and travel professionals of Hermosillo and Ciudad Obregon learn a great deal about what our state has to offer as a visitor destination. And participants get to experience an energetic fashion show featuring members of the local society as models. Also, every year we partner with a local charity who receives the proceeds from the exciting event.

I want to extend my thanks and appreciation for the industry partners who joined us for the Arizona Showcase where we had more than 800 attendees. AOT was joined by Aeromexico, Best Western Innsuites – Tucson, Days Inn Scottsdale, Fashion Square, Descubre Phoenix, Chandler Office of Tourism, Crowne Plaza San, Marcos Golf Resort, Courtyard by Marriott – Phoenix/Chandler, Residence Inn by Marriott Chandler, Hampton Inn & Suites – Phoenix Chandler Fashion Center, Flagstaff Convention & Visitors Bureau, Foothills Mall, General Growth Management – Tucson Mall and Park Place Mall, Greater Phoenix Convention Visitors Bureau, Intercontinental Montelucia Resort & Spa, Little America Hotel, Marriott International, Radisson Suites Tucson, Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, SpringHill Suites &

Towneplace Suites by Marriott Tempe, Tempe Convention & Visitors Bureau, Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau, Westcor, and The Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa.

By continuing with our marketing efforts in Sonora, we look forward to welcoming even more tourists that come to Arizona to shop, dine and visit our many attractions!

Have a great week.

AOT News

New Updates to AOT's Research Web site!

The following item has been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- [2008 AZ Tourism Year-End Summary](#)

The Arizona Tourism Year-End report provides a detailed look at domestic and international travel to Arizona during the year. The report examines domestic visitation to Arizona, the economic impact of the travel industry in Arizona and includes an analysis of year-end tourism indicators.

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at melkins@azot.gov.

Send Us Your Fall Travel Deals & Packages!

Now that we're heading into the fall season, we're looking for wonderful fall package deals from around the state to showcase on [Travel Deals](#).

Post your fall packages today and take advantage of this great opportunity to highlight where visitors can stay and what they can do in your region. Don't forget to partner with other area hotels or attractions to create even more memorable packages for visitors and keep them coming back for more!

If you are experiencing issues with uploading your travel deals or have any questions about the process, please contact Elysia Labita at 602-364-3705 or via e-mail at elabita@azot.gov.

AOT Activities

Partner with AOT on International Marketing Co-ops for FY10

During FY10 the Trade and Media Relations Division will conduct several co-operative marketing projects geared to increase consumer awareness about Arizona in key international markets and drive business to partnering tour operators. A brief summary of each campaign is included. Participation is open to Arizona CVBs, Chambers and DMOs. To view all of the co-operative marketing projects, [click here](#).

Upcoming Events & Activities

Arizona Media Marketplace

Date: October 15

Location: Scottsdale Fairmont Hotel

Travel Classics West

Date: October 15 – 18

Location: Scottsdale Fairmont Hotel

Canada Sales Mission

Date: October 19 – 23

Location: Toronto, Winnipeg and Edmonton

Japan Sales Mission

Date: October 26 – 30

Location: Tokyo and Osaka, Japan

Industry News

<http://www.arizonaguide.com/press-room/aot-in-action/october-13-2009-industry-news>

SAVE the DATE: Don't Miss the Third Annual NACOG Economic Development/Tourism Forum November 3 – 6!

Learn about the wonders of Page, Arizona and how you can expand your international tourism opportunities at the third annual Northern Arizona Council of Government Economic Development Tourism Forum!

- Speakers from the Bureau of Land Management AZ and Arizona Office of Tourism
- Experience many mobile workshops, related to economic development and tourism
- Enjoy Page's many tourism attractions

For more information, visit www.nacog.org.

United Airlines Adds Second Nonstop to San Francisco

United Airlines will add a second daily nonstop flight to San Francisco October 25, 2009. The seasonal flight will continue through mid-December. United offers the only nonstop service available to San Francisco from Tucson. United will also replace one of its regional jet aircraft with a larger jet, an A320, for one of its four daily flights to Denver from late October through March. In addition to San Francisco and Denver, United also offers daily nonstop service to Los Angeles.

Ax Falls on Four Conde Nast Titles

Conde Nast Publications, facing a steep drop in advertising, said it would chop four magazines from its roster-including 68-year-old *Gourmet*, long considered one of the magazine world's most prestigious magazines. The publishing giant-long known for a corporate culture as lavish as the lifestyle portrayed on its magazine pages-has come face to face with a stark reality caused by the steep fall-off in advertising. Ad pages at 14 of Conde Nast's 23 print publications fell by more than the industry average of 29.5 percent in the second quarter, according to the Publishers Information Bureau. *Gourmet* presented the most difficult call for Conde Nast. The magazine, founded in the 1940s, has long been considered one of the world's most prestigious food magazines, covering high-end restaurants and luxury vacations, (Pages B1, Wall Street Journal; A1, New York Times; *Travel Advance*, Oct 6)

Travel Promotion Act Passes House

The House on Wednesday passed the Travel Promotion Act, with strong bipartisan support by a vote of 358 to 66. The legislation, a top priority of the travel industry, creates a public-private partnership to promote the U.S. as a premier travel destination and better explain U.S. security policies. The Senate passed identical legislation earlier in September, but because of procedural requirements, an additional Senate vote is expected in the coming days. Passage of the measure was hailed by the U.S. Travel Association, a key backer of the bill.

"The need for travel promotion has never been greater," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of U.S. Travel. Supporters of the travel legislation claim it would create 40,000 American jobs and drive \$4 billion in new spending. But conservatives say the government should not be involved in marketing. Europe also opposed the measure because it would be most affected by a new \$10 fee that would be paid by foreign visitors who don't need visas. (*Special to TA: www.OrlandoSentinel.com/Business; Travel Advance, Oct 8*)

Conventions Seek Lower Profile Cities

What happens in Vegas may be moving to Detroit, Denver or Dallas, says USA Today. The public backlash against lavish corporate meetings and conventions in cities such as Las Vegas, Palm Springs and Hawaii is becoming a boon for cities such as Detroit and other places viewed as destinations less likely to raise eyebrows. "Golf outings and big lavish parties are gone," said Carla Conner-Penzabene, director of sales for the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau.

What some convention planners call the "AIG effect" -after the insurance giant whose officials traveled to a luxury California resort last year a week after the federal government agreed to a \$85 billion bailout-is causing business travelers to rethink their destinations, says the paper. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority reported a 26% decline this year in the number of people traveling to the city for meetings. (*Page 3A, USA Today, Wed.; Travel Advance, Oct 8*)

Travel Sector Takes Steps to Resist Flu

The travel industry was hard hit after the first reports of swine flu emerged from Mexico in the spring. Trips were canceled, destination weddings were moved elsewhere and flights were grounded as traveler demand plummeted. Hotels across the country, including the Marriott Marquis in New York, are stepping up efforts to clean the items most frequently touched by guests, like handrails and elevator buttons. The industry, already reeling from the effects of the recession, has reason to be cautious as the autumn flu season gets underway. Still, because the

H1N1 pandemic strain, or swine flu, has generally not been more virulent than ordinary seasonal flu,

Airports, hotels and airlines are trying to find a balance between showing that they are taking substantive steps and not acting so aggressively that they set off a panic among travelers. Most major hotel brands, among them Marriott, Hilton, Starwood and InterContinental, are ramping up the cleaning of items most frequently touched by guests. *(Page B1, New York Times; Travel Advance, Oct 8)*

ADOT to Close Rest Areas, Consider Closing MVD Offices

The Arizona Department of Transportation announced plans last week to shut down 13 highway rest areas, consider closing 12 Motor Vehicle Division offices, defer \$370 million in highway construction projects and cut 10 percent of its staff. ADOT officials say the cuts are needed to close a \$100 million budget shortfall. ADOT Director John Halikowski says more than \$500 million in transportation funding has been cut in the past year by lawmakers trying to close a huge state budget shortfall. The 13 rest areas will close beginning on Oct. 19. Five other state rest areas will remain open. ADOT has received \$350 million in federal stimulus funding, but state funding for other projects will be cut by \$370 million over the next four years. *(Arizona Republic, Oct. 8)*

The Trend in Travel: Value

There's a new norm in travel pricing: rock bottom, travel experts say. "The rock-bottom room rates of the past year are expected to continue until hotels see a solid pickup in demand next year. Even then, prices won't skyrocket overnight because they were slashed so deeply, and no one knows what the new norm is going to be for travelers," says The Arizona Republic. "For the consumer, a buyer's market will persist into 2011," said Mark Woodworth, president of PKF Hospitality Research.

That's why there are summer-like prices and perks extended into the normally busier fall season in popular tourist areas such as Las Vegas. Buy-a-night-or-two-and-get-one-free offers are abounding around the country, with discounts for dining, the spa and even the gift shop. "We're at the mercy of the consumer right now," said Roger Bloss, president and CEO of Vantage Hospitality Group. "Today, value is trendy."

Some hotels have even added pick-up-your room service where guests order items but pick them up to save on tipping. Free poolside activities are also popular. And luxury hotels are expanding their menus in their casual eateries. "The discounting is going to (continue to) be an issue," said David Kong, president and CEO of Phoenix-based Best Western International. *(TravelMole Newsletter, Oct. 8)*

Study tells how to sell to the family market

Just-for-kids amenities are more popular than ever and continue to expand in scope and variety despite the ailing economy, reports Family Travel Forum's FTFC consulting division.

The report, "Family Hotels Learn to Monetize the Family Market," concluded the almost two-fold increase in the number of US adult travelers who take children along has led tourism officials to target the younger audience directly.

Some other key findings:

- Family resorts and luxury hotels are up-selling parents and grandparents on spacious, decorated family suites vs. decorated double rooms.
- Family resorts and luxury hotels are offering children more and better fee-based services, such as spa treatments and cooking classes, once reserved for adults.
- Family resorts and luxury hotels are offering family-focused guidebooks to promote commission-generating tours and attractions in their area.
- Some family resorts and luxury hotels are now promoting local culture because many families prefer, and will pay for, a more authentic travel experience.

(TravelMole Newsletter, Oct. 8)

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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